# Benevolence, Equanimity, and Shared Joy: Three Qualities of the Heart

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## Purpose of the Text

This document is addressed to a group of former students who wish to understand and cultivate three essential qualities for a more conscious, balanced, and compassionate life: benevolence, equanimity, and shared joy. These qualities are part of Buddhist practice, but they can be lived by anyone, without the need to follow a spiritual tradition. They are attitudes of the heart that help us relate to others in a freer, more generous, and more stable way. Each quality will be explained with simple examples, reflections, and practical suggestions for applying them in daily life.

## I. Benevolence (Metta)

Benevolence is the sincere wish that others may be well. In Buddhism it is called *metta*, which means loving-kindness. It does not depend on whether we like someone or whether they agree with us. It is an attitude that arises from an open heart.

### Everyday Example

Imagine you see a stranger on public transport. You know nothing about their life. Practicing benevolence would be to internally wish: May you be well. May you have health. May you find peace. It is not necessary to say it aloud. Only to feel it.

### Example in Close Relationships

A friend is going through a difficult time. Even if you cannot solve their problem, you can accompany them with benevolence: listening without judgment, wishing they find relief, and being present with kindness.

### Practical Application

- Before speaking with someone, ask yourself: Do I wish this person to be well?
- In moments of conflict, remember you do not need to agree in order to wish the others well-being.
- Practice internal phrases such as: May you be free from suffering. May you have joy.

### Reflection

Benevolence is not weakness. It is quiet strength. It is the wish for well-being for all, without exception.

## II. Equanimity (Upekkha)

Equanimity is the capacity to maintain calm and inner balance, even when things change or become difficult. In Buddhism it is called *upekkha*, and it is considered a form of wisdom that helps us not be carried away by extreme emotions.

### Everyday Example

You receive unexpected criticism at work. Instead of reacting with anger or sadness, you breathe, listen, and respond with serenity. It does not mean it does not affect you, but you choose not to get lost in the emotion. That is equanimity.

### Example in Close Relationships

A family member makes decisions you do not share. Instead of trying to control the situation, you practice equanimity: you accept that each person has their own path, and you maintain your presence without judgment or rejection.

### Practical Application

- When something bothers you, take a pause before reacting. Breathe deeply.
- Remember that everything changes: the pleasant and the difficult. Nothing lasts forever.
- Observe your emotions without judging them. Acknowledge them, but do not let them dominate you.

### Reflection

Equanimity is not indifference. It is being present with calm, without getting lost in what happens.

## III. Shared Joy (Mudita)

Shared joy is the ability to sincerely rejoice in the well-being, achievements, or happiness of others. In Buddhism it is called *mudita*, and it is a form of emotional generosity that frees us from comparison and envy.

### Everyday Example

A colleague receives recognition for their effort. Even though you also worked hard, you choose to rejoice for them. You congratulate them sincerely, without feeling that their success diminishes your value. That attitude strengthens the relationship and gives you inner peace.

### Example in Close Relationships

Your sister achieves something you also desired: a new job, a stable partner, a personal accomplishment. Instead of comparing yourself or feeling jealous, you practice shared joy: you recognize her happiness as valuable, and allow yourself to feel joy for her.

### Practical Application

- When someone receives good news, observe your inner reaction: is there joy or discomfort?
- Practice sincere congratulations, without irony or obligation.
- Remember that the well-being of others does not take anything away from you. On the contrary, it can inspire you.

### Reflection

Rejoicing for others is a form of freedom. It connects us with the best of ourselves.

## IV. Comparison of the Three Qualities

| Quality | Definition | Everyday Example | Suggested Practice |
|---|---|---|---|
| Benevolence (Metta) | Sincerely wishing the well-being of others | Wishing peace and health to a stranger | Repeat internal phrases of kindness: May you be well |
| Equanimity (Upekkha) | Maintaining inner balance amidst change | Listening to criticism without reacting with anger | Pause before responding, observe emotions |
| Shared Joy (Mudita) | Sincerely rejoicing in others happiness | Congratulating someone sincerely for their achievement | Recognize that others success does not diminish you |

# V. Conclusion

These three qualities  benevolence, equanimity, and shared joy  are paths to living with more peace, clarity, and connection with others. They do not require special knowledge or ideal conditions. They only require practice, attention, and openness.

By cultivating these attitudes, we learn to relate to others without fear, without comparison, and without the need to control. We become freer, more present, and more human.

## Final Reminder

- Benevolence connects us with the wish that all may be well.
- Equanimity gives us stability in the face of change.
- Shared joy frees us from envy and opens us to others happiness.

## Invitation

Practice these qualities every day, in the small and the great. Not as an obligation, but as a way of living with wisdom and an open heart.

# The Three Qualities of the Heart: Access from Small Understanding

## Purpose of the Text

This text does not seek to explain. It seeks to accompany. It is addressed to those who have read the original document on the three qualities of the heart and felt that they did not understand. But the heart is not understood. It is recognized. This text is an invitation to read from another place: not from the analyzing mind, but from the listening body.

## Reading as Practice

Before reading, pause. Breathe. Do not seek to understand. Seek to feel. This text is not information. It is atmosphere. It is not about memorizing what it says. It is about letting something move within you as you read.

### First Quality: Aperture

Aperture is not being available for everything. It is not saying yes out of obligation. It is not closing oneself out of fear. It is allowing what arrives to arrive. Without defending. Without fleeing. Without controlling. The aperture of the heart is like a window that does not lock. When someone approaches with pain, you do not interrupt. You do not correct. You do not flee. You are simply there. That is aperture.

### Second Quality: Presence

Presence is not being physically there. It is being without distraction. It is not looking. It is seeing. It is not hearing. It is listening. It is being there without wanting to change anything. The presence of the heart is like a flame that does not flicker. When someone cries, you do not think what to say. You do not seek to console. You do not seek to avoid. You are simply there. That is presence.

### Third Quality: Resonance

Resonance is not emotion. It is not feeling the same as the other. It is feeling with the other. It is allowing what the other lives to touch something in you. Even if you have not lived it. Even if you do not understand it. The resonance of the heart is like a bowl that vibrates when another bowl vibrates nearby. It does not imitate. It does not copy. It accompanies. It breathes. It vibrates.

### Reading as Recognition

Do not try to understand these qualities as concepts. They are not ideas. They are gestures. They are ways of being. And you have already lived them. Even if you have not named them. Even if you have not recognized them. This text does not teach you something new. It reminds you of something ancient. Something that is already within you.

### Guiding Phrase

It is not about understanding. It is about opening, being, vibrating. The heart is not studied

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